

VOTE - Voter Outreach Through Education Washington Secretary of State

WASHINGTON STATE CURRICULUM GRADES 8-12

TEACHER: LESSON 7

THEME: INVOLVEMENT - WALKING THE WALK; TALKING THE TALK

"And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country."
(President John F. Kennedy, 1961)

Kennedy's admonition to get involved for the sake of democracy still rings true. It summons each of us who share the "blessings of liberty" to give something back by contributing to the democratic process. But how? Is it by becoming informed on issues and candidates? Is it by helping in a campaign or expressing one's views?

This lesson will:

1. Help students to practice getting connected with an informative web site and political parties, both avenues for future information and participation.
2. Challenge students to think of a variety of ways they can support a candidate or issue.
3. Quiz students along the way to help them review and to promote long-term retention.

Activity One will introduce students to the political parties in our state.

Activity Two will help students master the basic vocabulary of elections so they feel more included in "the conversation" and thus they can participate more knowledgeably.

Activity Three will introduce students to both the "Glossary" and the "Frequently Asked Questions" resources of the www.vote.wa.gov web site.

Activity Four will help students learn the titles of various elected offices at local, state and national levels and to learn how often each is up for election. It involves reading, creation of an election cycle, and a quiz-review at the end.

For each student, you will need to make a copy of:

- (A) the Student Lesson INVOLVEMENT: WALKING THE WALK; TALKING THE TALK,
- (B) the "Comprehensive Review Questions" on this page and
- (C) the Activity Four "Review Practice." You might also wish to make an overhead transparency of the answer keys for each activity.

Activities One and Three require access to the Internet. Activity Four requires drawing paper of some sort of colored markers and pens. You will want to secure these in advance.

The activities are designed for use in a self-tutorial mode, to be completed in class by each student working alone. You could adapt them for use as collaborative activities by pairing students. Students are to do each activity and section in order, reading and then completing the reinforcing quiz or assignment that immediately follows before moving to the next assignment.

ACTIVITY: ONE

Review Questions:

1. Under state law, a _____ party is a political party of which at least one nominee for President of the United States, United States Senator, or a statewide office received at least _____ percent of the total election vote cast at the last preceding general election held in an even-numbered year.
2. What are the names of the major parties in Washington State?
3. What are the names of two political parties that are unfamiliar to you? Do they have web sites or email addresses?
4. What are at least five more ways to join in support of your favorite candidate or issue? (Examples given are creation of signs and sending postcards to friends or family.)

ANSWERS:

1. Major political; 5%
2. Currently, Democratic Party, Republican Party and Libertarian Party
3. Answers will vary from the list of existing parties on the web site www.secstate.wa.gov/elections/parties.aspx.
4. Not in any special order: Doorbelling, phone calls, helping with mass mailings, passing out leaflets, sign waving, putting up yard signs, materials distribution, writing letters to the editor, getting signatures and endorsements, contributing money, attending rallies and fundraisers, soliciting donations and displaying bumper stickers.

ACTIVITY: TWO

Ask students to do the Comprehensive Review Questions on their own paper so they have the option of a second pass at the material on the original handout. The goal is to master the terminology so students are invited to reread a section if needed. When each student has satisfactorily completed all sections, you should administer the comprehensive review quiz (below) for a measure of how well each learned the basic terminology. Students are told of this in their directions. The answers are provided so you might make copies or an overhead transparency.

You may wish to award a prize or certificate of some sort to those that achieve the top rating on the Comprehensive Review for Activity Two.

Comprehensive Review Questions:

Section A

1. Voters who will be absent from their communities, a resident in a healthcare facility, voters otherwise unable to vote in person on election day, or voters who simply choose to do so may request an _____ from the county elections office.
2. A guide produced by a county or a city that provides information about ballot measures, candidates and other election information that pertains to county or city choices is a _____ Voters' Pamphlet.
3. 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on election day are the _____.
4. The nickname for the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 is the " _____ " law because it allows residents to obtain voter registration materials as they apply for a driver's license.
5. The official list of all candidates and issues upon which a voter is entitled to vote at an election is called the _____.

Section B

1. An election required to be held on a fixed date in November recurring at regular intervals is the _____ election.
2. A _____ is a way to raise money for public projects like a new school, if approved by a vote of the people.
3. A power granted to voters in our state to introduce a matter before the legislature or to place it directly before the voters for their approval is an _____.
4. Winning by a number that is greater than others in a list but less than a simple majority is called winning by a _____.
5. A power granted to voters in our state to either vote on a matter referred by the Legislature to the people's will, or to override a law passed by the Legislature, is called a _____.
6. A question or proposal submitted in an election to obtain the voters' will on the matter, sometimes called a proposition, is a _____.
7. The process that reduces the field of candidates for public office in advance of the general election is called the _____.
8. When a candidate or a measure receives over 50% of the votes cast the result is called a _____.

Section C

1. One who seeks or is nominated for an office is a _____ or a nominee.
2. This term refers to the office of governor, as in a _____ candidate.
3. Certain elective public offices are _____ offices which means that the candidates run for the position on the basis of political party membership.
4. The _____ is the person who presently holds an office, either by election or appointment.
5. A group that shares the same views about government and works together to win elections is called a _____.
6. A candidate not affiliated with a political party is said to be an _____ candidate.

7. A _____ is what we call the set of principles and positions on issues that a candidate or political party endorses as part of a campaign.
8. Names that are not included on the official ballot but are added by a voter in the act of voting are called _____.
9. A time period (generally one week) used to register for a political contest is called the _____ period.
10. An official's _____ is the body of voters having the right to take part in the election of a candidate.
11. Committees formed by business, organizations or unions to contribute funds to a candidate or issue are called _____ Committees.

Section D

These political divisions are listed out of order. Rearrange them in their correct ascending order from most local to most global or distant.

Precinct, State, City, County, Nation

ANSWERS:

Activity Two, Section A

1. Absentee Ballot
2. Local
3. Voting Hours
4. Motor Voter
5. Ballot

Activity Two, Section B

1. General
2. Bond Election
3. Initiative
4. Plurality
5. Referendum
6. Measure
7. Primary
8. Majority

Activity Two, Section C

1. Candidate
2. Gubernatorial
3. Partisan
4. Incumbent
5. Political Party
6. Independent
7. Platform
8. Write-Ins
9. Filing
10. Constituency
11. Political Action

Activity Two, Section D

1. Precinct
2. City
3. County
4. State
5. Nation

ACTIVITY: THREE

Review Questions:

1. What is the term for the process of examining ballots or groups of ballots, subtotals, and cumulative totals in order to determine the official returns of, and prepare the certification for, a primary or general election? _____
2. To ____ is to attempt to influence politics in favor of a special interest.
3. The number of people who voted in an election is called the ____ _____. It's often expressed as a percentage of registered voters who cast ballots.
4. Since election night voting results are unofficial, how many days have to pass for the results to be final for a primary? _____ How many days are needed to certify a general election? _____
5. What ballots are still accepted and tabulated after election day? _____
6. Who is in charge of examining the ballots and vote totals in order to determine the official returns for an election? _____
7. If the difference between the top two candidates is fewer than 2000 votes and less than one-half of one percent of the total, what is mandatory after an election? _____

ANSWERS:

1. Canvassing
2. Lobby
3. Voter Turnout
4. 10 days, 15 days
5. Absentee Ballots
6. County Canvassing Board
7. Recount

ACTIVITY: FOUR

This part of the lesson is best done in pairs for the effects of collaboration, but that is not mandatory if you prefer that some or all students work alone. Some may experience anxiety because they don't feel "artistic." Being with a partner may alleviate this problem. When complete, ask students to share their creations with the class and explain the symbolism they used to organize and convey the information.

Copy and distribute the review practice below as a culmination to this lesson. Use it either as a quiz or as a further practice to reinforce their learning. You can direct students to do it without the aid of notes or you could allow the aid of the drawings they made if you wish. Tell students not to worry about putting answers in the same specific order as on their Student Lesson Seven.

Review-Practice:

Fill in the names of the offices that fit the criteria given.

Offices that require an election every 2 years:

Local:

1.

State:

1.

National:

1.

Offices that require an election every 4 years:

City:

1.

2.

3.

County:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

- 9.
 - 10.
- State:
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
 - 8.
 - 9.
 - 10.
- National:
- 1.

Offices that require an election every 6 years:

- County:
1. (Some)
 - 2.
 3. (Some)
- State:
- 1.
 - 2.
- National:
- 1.

ANSWERS:

The following offices have 2-year terms:

Precinct Committee Officer
State Representative
U.S. Representative

The following offices have 4-year terms:

City Mayor
City Council Member
Municipal Court Judge
County Sheriff
County Auditor
County Clerk
County Treasurer
County Prosecuting Attorney
County Assessor
County Coroner
County Commissioner/Councilor
County District Court Judge
County Superior Court Judge
State Senator
State Insurance Commissioner
State Commissioner of Public Lands
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
State Attorney General
State Auditor
State Treasurer
Secretary of State
State Lieutenant Governor
State Governor
U.S. President (limited to 2 terms total, consecutive or split, by the 22nd Amendment)

The following offices have 6-year terms:

(Some) County Public Utility Commissioner
County Drainage District Commissioner

(Some) Fire District Commissioner
State Court of Appeals Judge
State Supreme Court Judge
U.S. Senator